



A PHILANTHROPIST WITH A HEART

By Wayne Rollins

Photos by Michael Paniccia and Andrew H. Walker/Getty Images

Hair
Henry de la Paz of Warren Tricomi
Mandy Hernandez

Make-up
Melissa Strazza of Kamara Annert
Renee Garnes for Artists
at Wilhelmina /Nars

Cover One
Black Double Breasted Blazer
with Gold Buttons - Balmain
Vintage Hat - Bellini Originals
Photo by Michael Paniccia

Cover Two
Black and White
Striped Sequin Gown - Zang Toi
Photo by Andrew H. Walker/Getty Images





Cover Jewelry by Christopher Designs

E113-EC
10.85 ct Emerald Crisscut diamond earrings set in PLAT – side diamonds 2.50 cts brilliant cut diamonds

G93-3-EC400
4.00cts Emerald Crisscut engagement ring set in platinum – side diamonds 1.80cts brilliant cut diamonds

Dark Green Satin and Silver Gown
- Zang Toi

Photo assistant James Yarusinsky
Stylist Marcus Stewart

“While there are many who have a favorite charity, there are few who devote a significant portion of their lives to it and even fewer who are the motor behind raising attention and financing for a myriad of different causes. But whether one mentions the NY Women’s Foundation, the New York City Mission Society, the Southampton Hospital or the Southampton Animal Shelter, the one name that keeps popping up is that of Jean Shafiroff. A member of eight different charity boards, Shafiroff is more than a donor or even a philanthropist; she is a woman on a mission.

With an MBA from the Graduate School of Business at Columbia University and a BS in Physical Therapy from Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons, Jean – after a brief stint as a physical therapist at St. Luke’s Hospital in NYC – went on to work both in public finance and in private partnerships on Wall Street. From there Jean gradually embarked upon a journey of devoting herself to a battery of worthy philanthropic ventures.

Starting with the Jewish Board of Family and Children Services, an organization she has now been involved with for over 20 years it’s clear that Shafiroff’s enthusiasm is contagious. At present the charity boasts a \$180 million dollar annual budget and a total of 175 different programs. Jean, after successfully raising two daughters, increased her devotion to her philanthropic work by serving in the capacity of board member, chairwoman, honoree, underwriter and hostess of numerous charity events. Through her hard work and perseverance, she is personally responsible for raising millions of dollars, which has been used to help thousands of people in need.

Married to Martin Shafiroff, an investment advisor, Jean works in tandem with several city-based and Southampton nonprofit organizations. Besides the aforementioned charities, she is involved as a board member of the Couture Council, French Heritage Society, Lighthouse Guild Advisory Board and the Southampton Bath and Tennis Club’s Charitable Foundation. Jean is who she is because of her indefatigable need to help others. Beyond her laudable managerial skills, her compassion, generosity and enthusiasm are most admirable. She is also humble and praises others rather than herself.

Although the Resident Magazine in-

terviewed Shafiroff a year ago - because of the vast amount of work she has done since - we decided to call on her again in order to let our readers know what she’s been up to since.

R: What motivates you to keep at it? Why this overwhelming desire to dedicate your life to charities?

J: We live in a city where 30% of the children live at or below the poverty level. I can’t just go on living here and remain idle. I must try to facilitate change. We live in an age when the middle-class is having a tougher time to survive. Life is more difficult for the middle class now than ever before. Opportunities for a good education as well as opportunities for getting jobs are more strained than ever. We must make those options available to people so they can improve their future. Possibilities need to be made available. And hopes must be turned into realities. Women must have pay parity with men. Sadly, women in many parts of the world are considered unequal to men and are even considered second-class citizens. All of this must change. If we do not try to encourage positive development, our society cannot move forward. Moreover, society will slip backwards if education and the opportunities

for it are not made available to all. After all, without proper education there can be no upward mobility. I have traveled to a number of third-world countries where education is very limited and where large proportions of the population don’t have jobs.

A few years ago, I toured Cambodia. I spent time in an orphanage, toured a number of schools and went into many homes. Resources were extremely limited. The people desperately wanted to be educated and to work. The opportunities were far too restricted.

Many Americans do not realize how fortunate they are to have all of the liberties and opportunities that exist here at home. The opportunity to move forward exists in the United States more so than in many other countries. We must preserve this. And we must all work to keep opportunity available and to keep equality alive. These beliefs fuel the volunteer work that I do. We should all be able to lead a good life. No one should go hungry, and everyone should have the opportunity to receive a good education and move forward. I care deeply about those less fortunate than myself. Probably my greatest virtue is that I am a hard worker. There is no greater gift in life than to be able to give back.

R: What does most of your work entail?

J: I happen to love being a volunteer. Adding something to each of the charities I’m involved with is important to me. For instance, take the New York Women’s Foundation. It does phenomenal work by empowering women out of poverty. A big part of charity isn’t just the giving of funds, but also helping to raise money and awareness. The amount of people who can write an enormous check is very small, so it’s often all about getting many to give, rolling up your sleeves, doing the work, organizing events, bringing people together, making introductions and fundraising... Lead by example and hope the others will not only follow but even do one better.

I am a fortunate person and believe that I have a responsibility to give back. It is difficult to live in a world where there is so much needless suffering without trying to make a difference.

R: How do you choose one charity over another?

J: I am generally approached by different charitable organizations and then



Light Green and Silver Strapless Cocktail Dress - Oscar de la Renta
Silver Shoes - Christian Louboutin

Jewelry by Christopher Designs



SPOTLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT

Red Silk
Strapless Jumper
- Victor de Souza



Yellow Satin Gown
- B. Michael

I think about ways of assisting them. Of course I do my due diligence. Like anybody, I have my favorites. For instance, I am passionate about women's issues, healthcare, animal welfare and underserved populations in our society.

R: What is something you're working on now?

J: Recently, I joined the Board of the NYC Mission Society. In April, I served as the Chair of Mission's Annual Gala. I'd like to bring more awareness to NYC Mission and get more people involved with this very important cause. We are a 200-year-old anti-poverty charity serving children and adolescents in New York City. We bring people from Harlem, Brooklyn, Downtown... people in government, people involved in the social world, people from all walks of life coming together to create positive change. Bi-racial, diversified, strong.

This summer I will Chair the Ellen Her- manson Foundation's 20th Anniversary Gala, which will fund the Breast Center at Southampton Hospital. I will also Chair the Southampton Animal Shelter's Annual Gala.

R: I heard you do lots with other Hamptons charities as well – what could possibly be wrong there?

J: Like anywhere else there is poverty and healthcare needs are extremely important. We have migrant workers, homeless people and the unemployed. I have been particularly involved with Southampton Hospital. In 2010, 2011 and 2013, I chaired their Annual Summer Gala. These 3 events raised \$5.4 million. The Hospital turns no one away.

R: What are some of the insider things you can tell us about fundraising?

J: Most people want to help but they need to be asked. They often want to be involved but if they're not asked they may not participate; so a major part of what I do is to introduce people to different charities. I like mixing the old guard with the new. Everything is moving very fast and you must change with the times... We live in a meritocracy – one in which the sources of power change rapidly. Fundraising is a team effort and I am very much a player even when

tasked with the role of being the leader. Still as far as contributions are concerned, we'd be nowhere were it not for the hard work and inventiveness of each and every member.

R: That leads me to another question. How did you get started in the first place?

J: My father was a high school music teacher. My mother was a stay at home mom. I grew up on Long Island. My parents and teachers taught my brothers and me to care for those in need. When my daughters were young, I was active at their schools and did volunteer work. It wasn't until my daughters went off to college that I finally had the time to become fully engaged in charity work both in New York City and Southampton. Living with compassion and treating others with kindness, dignity and respect are values that are vitally important to me.

R: You are known for your style and fashion sense. How conscious an element is this in your life?



Jewelry by Christopher Designs
B40-5
Asscher Crisscut bracelet 3.01 ctw
, side diamonds 20.24 cts

Earrings
N25ER – Round Crisscut Diamond earrings

Orange Satin Cocktail Dress
- B. Michael

J: I am passionate about both style and fashion. When I am well dressed I feel good. Style is a form of self-expression. As a result, I love being involved on the Board of the Couture Council, which helps to fund the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

R: Now that spring is finally here, I was going to ask is there a special way to dress for the Hamptons?

J: Each Hampton has its distinctive style. Southampton is known for two big Galas - the Southampton Hospital Summer Party and Parish Art Museum Gala. It's traditional to wear a gown to both of these events. Of course, you don't have to follow this tradition, but I usually do. For daytime, there are the usual sundresses. This year we will probably see many geometric patterns and neon colors. Bright colors, asymmetrical shapes and floral motifs seem to be the thing. We'll see the influence of the late 60's, early 70's accompanied with a bohemian chic.

On the other hand, East Hampton is more laid back. Southampton is a bit more preppy. Bridgehampton is somewhere in between the others in style. Montauk is all about beachwear and has the surfing and youth motif going for it. I love going to Montauk!

R: What designers do you like yourself?

J: I love mixing designer and vintage pieces. In terms of designers, I love the work of the recently departed Oscar de la Renta. I also like Carolina Herrera, Zang Toi and B. Michael. Then, there are the many talented young designers like Victor de Souza. There's also Alexander Wang and Marni. Of course, I love Ralph Lauren, Michael Kors, Prada, Chanel and vintage Givenchy. It's fun to add items from stores like H&M, Zara and vintage shops. And sometimes I just love raiding my closet for retro looks.

R: You've received awards by many different organizations honoring the work you've done. How does that make you feel?

J: It always feels a little bit strange to be honored by charities when it's really such a privilege just to be able to work for them.